In the Abstract, please amend as follows:

A storage-medium rental system includes a portable storage medium to be rented to ~~the~~ a user, a portable ~~semiconductor~~ memory owned by the user, a rental-shop apparatus owned by ~~the~~ a rental agent, and a playback apparatus owned by the user. The storage medium prestores encrypted content generated by encrypting digital work using a content encryption key. The ~~semiconductor~~ portable memory has an area f or securely storing a content decryption key. The rental-shop apparatus stores a content decryption key for decrypting the encrypted content. The rental-shop apparatus writes the content decryption key to the ~~semiconductor~~ portable memory. The playback apparatus securely reads the content decryption key from the ~~semiconductor~~ portable memory, reads the encrypted content from the storage medium, decrypts the encrypted content using the content decryption key, and plays back the decrypted content.